

## DRAFT

Fair Housing Commission Meeting Minutes  
Municipal Office Annex  
140 W. Patrick Street  
Frederick, Maryland 21701  
Conference Room B

February 11, 2016  
1:00 pm to 2:00 pm

Present: Kay Gant, Chair  
Freddy Rubio, Commissioner  
Katie Nash, Commissioner – via telephone

Absent: Nelson Zahler, Commissioner  
Allen Beard, Commissioner

Staff Present: Eileen Barnhard, CDBG Program Administrator  
Matt Davis, Manager of Comprehensive Planning  
Saundra Nickols, City Attorney

Meeting called to order at 1:02 pm by Kay Gant, Chair.

Draft December 4, 2015 Minutes will not be considered for adoption at this meeting as the Commissioners who were in attendance at the December 4, 2015 are not present at this meeting in order to vote.

Chair Kay Gant welcomed Freddy Rubio to the Commission.

As an initiative to promote fair housing awareness, the Commission is attending Neighbor Advisory Council (NAC) meetings to inform citizens. Commission Chair Kay Gant presented at NAC 3 on Monday February 8, 2016; she provided handouts on the Commission, the 2016 Fair Housing Poster Contest Calendar and pencils.

Ms. Gant received a question from one of the attendees about tracking offending landlords and those who relocate from other areas. She explained the Commission does not currently have a tracking system but one item on the agenda is to review the Housing Discrimination Ordinance which may address this in the future. Specifically the Commission wishes to address the Ordinance sections that speak to this. Section 11 (f) – If conciliation is successful the agreement shall be confidential unless all parties agree to publication.

Question from Ms. Gant – how will the respondent be on record as an offender of the Ordinance? The current Ordinance shields the respondent. City Attorney Sandra Nickols explained that conciliation and hearings are two different actions; conciliation is typically a way for parties to reach an agreement. Often parties wish to reach an agreement through conciliation rather than a hearing. The current Ordinance as referenced keeps the parties confidential. If the Commission wishes to consider proposing to change the Ordinance to make the agreement public, the City Attorney can draft language to be considered. Commissioner Katie Nash expressed that she did not believe making the agreement public would be a deterrent to filing a complaint or seek conciliation; Commissioner Freddy Rubio agreed.

The Commission discussed researching the fair housing complaints from other jurisdictions including contacting the Maryland Municipal League, Howard County Human Relations Commission and the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights.

The Chair asked for a motion to have the Legal department draft a change to the Ordinance to Section 11 (f) to make the conciliation agreement public. Motion was seconded by Ms. Nash. No discussion. All were in favor.

The Chair asked about Section 10(f) (4) of the Ordinance - Is it lawful to conceal the identities of the respondent and/complainant until an order of discrimination has been found by the Commission? The City Attorney responded while it is lawful, if this is something the Commission wishes to revise along with other changes to the Ordinance it is permissible to allow the parties to be identified.

Discussion centered on the process and the roles of the Commission, the Legal Department and rules of procedure for future complaints. The Commission will actively work on refining the Ordinance.

The Commission will also consider reviewing telephone attendance for implementation into the Ordinance or Rules of Procedure as well.

Matt Davis, Manager of Comprehensive Planning reported that a fair housing video can be made in time for April. The framework would include the City's public information coordinator asking questions to the Mayor and staff based on input from the Fair Housing Commission. This would air on Channel 99.

Next Meeting Date will be Friday June 3, 2016 at 10:00 AM Municipal Office Annex Building.

Motion to adjourn made by Ms. Nash, seconded by Mr. Rubio; all were in favor.

End of Meeting.